

## CHANGING TRENDS IN EUROPEANIZATION: TURKEY'S ALIGNMENT ON TRANSPORT

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### **Abstract**

*The current stalemate between the EU and Turkey directly affects much policy implementation, ranging from democracy to the economy. In terms of escaping from this crisis, the current proposed solutions seem to be only effective in a handful of areas. Concerning Turkey's Europeanization, there is certain inertia. In a fraught period, transport policy is a surprising success story, with its stability and continuation in the alignment process. This study investigates the main reasons and driving forces behind this curious case. The changing dynamics between different periods has not only changed the background factors but also contributed to a progressive approach, which has once again showed the importance of domestic political preferences when it comes to Europeanization.*

**Keywords:** European Union, Turkey, Transport, Europeanization, Rationalist Institutionalism

### ***Avrupalılaşmada Farklılaşan Eğilimler: Türkiye'nin AB Ulaştırma Politikalarına Uyumu***

### **Özet**

*Avrupa Birliği ve Türkiye arasında günümüzde yaşanmakta olan sorunlar demokrasiden, ekonomik ilişkilere kadar birçok konuyu etkilemektedir. Krizden çıkış için öne sürülen çözüm önerileri sadece birkaç alanda etkili olabilmiş ve genel daralmayı çözememiştir. Avrupalılaşma konusu ise sürekli gerilemenin yaşandığı*

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*bir süreç haline gelmiştir. Olumsuzlukların yaşandığı bu dönemde ulaştırma ve ulaştırma alanında entegrasyonun istikrarlı bir şekilde AB'ye yaklaşması ise tuhaf ama olumlu bir gelişmeyi işaret etmektedir. Bu çalışma oldukça sorunlu bir dönemin içerisinde istikrarlı bir şekilde AB'ye entegre olan Türkiye ulaştırma politikalarını ve bütünleşmenin arkasındaki faktörleri ele almıştır. Dönemler içerisinde farklılık arz eden bu faktörler, Avrupalılaştırma sürecinin devamını sağlamış ve ayrıca iç siyasi dinamiklerin de süreç için ne kadar önem arz ettiğini tekrar ortaya koymuştur.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** *Avrupa Birliği, Türkiye, Ulaştırma, Avrupalılaştırma, Rasyonel kurumsalcılık*

### Introduction

The integration of transport systems has always been an integral part of European unification. In the Treaty of Rome, the founding members called for a pathway to create a single system for an obvious reason: a combined, interconnected transport structure was essential for the effective functioning of a single market between European states. The Treaty of Rome proposed these changes by abolishing unnecessary differences in transport costs, settling on the framework of the present “Common Transport Policy”.<sup>1</sup> Between 1957 and 2019, the EU’s transport policy evolved under the guidelines of this framework to become the cornerstone of the single market. However, several waves of enlargement created tough challenges for European policy makers during this evolutionary period. Transport policy was particularly affected by the deepening and widening of the EU. At the end of the 90s, the EU expanded even further to include Central and Eastern European countries, reached into the Western Balkans and, finally, proposed candidacy to Turkey.

Given Turkey’s EU candidacy and a growing economic partnership, the Europeanization of and alignment of its domestic transport systems and norms became particularly important for the EU. For geographical reasons, Turkey is a natural gateway for the Single Market to reach newly emerging Central Asian and Middle Eastern markets, so Turkey’s inclusion in the European transport area was considered essential. In 2005, to exploit this potential, the EU proposed 35 negotiation chapters to Turkey, of which transport covered two significant ones: “Transport Policy” and “Trans-

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<sup>1</sup> European Economic Community, *The Treaty of Rome* (Rome: European Economic Community, 1957).

European Networks-Transport". Triggered by the ultimate reward of membership, Turkey began a swift alignment period (2002-2005), which Ziya Öniş has named the "golden age" of Europeanization in Turkey.<sup>2</sup> Since 2005, however, the initially positive tone of negotiations has turned negative.

During this turbulent period, work on chapters concerning the rule of law, justice and home affairs all lost momentum whereas alignment in transport still showed promise. That is, even though the chapters were suspended for political reasons,<sup>3</sup> Turkey was still signalling progress on them.<sup>4</sup> This was achieved even though the perceived advantages of being in the EU were weakening, the credibility of EU conditionality had almost disappeared and the reopening of the chapters was doubtful. To understand this contradictory trend regarding transport and the reasons behind Turkey's willingness during an unfavourable era, one should ask what the main driving forces behind the Europeanization of Turkish transport policy were. This study argues that focusing on these driving factors behind transport developments can help us to understand why they continued without conditionality, the changing trends between different eras of Europeanization and the future of EU-Turkey relations.

This study addresses the above question by separating EU-Turkey relations into two different periods to uncover the reaction regarding a particular policy area to Europeanization in the context of changing trends, factors and political differences. Since Europeanization is a dynamic, ever-changing process, it is inevitable that underlying factors shift between periods, regions and members. As Heritier and Knill point out, changing variables and pathways are evident across different member states for the same directive.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, it is assumed here that these changes also apply to different alignment periods for the same country. Regarding Turkey, the first period covers the time between the 1999 Helsinki Summit and the start of negotiations in 2005. As mentioned above, this was the most promising and

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<sup>2</sup> Ziya Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate," *Insight Turkey* 10, no. 4 (2008): 38.

<sup>3</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, Turkey / Organisation / Directorate of Sectoral Policies / "Chapter 14 - Transport Policy," Fasil 15 - Enerji, accessed November 09, 2018, [https://www.ab.gov.tr/79\\_en.html](https://www.ab.gov.tr/79_en.html).

<sup>4</sup> Economic Development Foundation, "Acilmayan Muzakere Fasillarında Ne Durumdayız?," *Economic Development Foundation Publications*, no. 279 (2016): 1-156.

<sup>5</sup> Adrienne Heritier and Christoph Knill, "Differential Responses to European Policies: A Comparison", *MPI Collective Goods Preprint*, no: 7, (2000): 1-32.

favourable era for Europeanization, when conditionality was strongest.<sup>6</sup> The second period covers the post-2005 era, when Europeanization in transport policy and the overall integration process faced unfavourable conditions. Regarding the change in political dynamics between these two eras, the driving factors behind the Europeanization of Turkish transport policy are assumed to differ. Between 1999 and 2005, credible membership conditions were applicable to transport policy. In other words, the positive wave of the “golden age” also affected the implementation of transport reforms. After the political shift of the post-2005 period and the suspension of the negotiation chapters, the unexpected continuation of Europeanization in transport can be explained through a continuation of EU reward mechanisms and domestic political preferences.

To clarify the nature of these driving forces, this study applies rational choice institutionalism or the “logic of consequentialism” to each period. This logic characterizes the actors in the Europeanization process as rational, goal oriented and utility maximisers in their bargaining with institutions like the EU.<sup>7</sup> In addition, there is a strong connection between choices in transport and rational behaviour that depend on material gains, ranging from individual to state level. Just as individual travel choices depend on a bounded rationality<sup>8</sup> so do state decisions on transport. Thus, calculations on policy-making are significantly affected by material and economic interests, which are also directly correlated. Figures show that growth in the economy and GDP leads to increased state investment, and more passenger and freight movements.<sup>9</sup> EU-Turkey transport relations are also correlated in this way. Thus, EU rewards, pre-accession instruments and the membership prospect should not be underestimated when it comes to a technical area such as transport. Accordingly, the “logic of consequentialism” provides a useful viewpoint to focus on these external reward mechanisms.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Öniş, “Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate,” 38.

<sup>7</sup> Tanja Borzel and Thomas Risse, “When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change”, *European Integration Online Papers (EIoP)* 4, no. 15 (2000): 6.

<sup>8</sup> Soora Rasouli and Harry Timmermans, *Bounded Rational Choice Behaviour: Applications in Transport* (Bingley: Emerald Group, 2015).

<sup>9</sup> Haluk Gerçek, “Ulaştırma-Ekonomi İlişkisi Çerçevesinde Türkiye’de Ulaştırmanın ve Demiryollarının Geleceği”, 2. *Ulusal Demiryolu Kongresi*, Ankara (December 1997).

<sup>10</sup> Frank Schimmelfennig and Ulrich Sedelmeier, “Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 11, no. 4 (2004): 671.

The aim of the study is to demonstrate that the reason for this unexpected continuation in Europeanization in a highly chaotic period is due to the dynamic material calculations of member/candidate states. Although the membership perspective has changed and reward mechanisms have weakened, the interdependence between the EU and Turkey has endured since 2005 regarding transport, economic interests and connections between domestic political strategies and Europeanization. To support this claim, a secondary data analysis will be conducted that includes important data sets obtained from official documents and statistics of the Turkish Government, EU progress reports on Turkey's candidacy and official EU data. Political party programs and reports from civilian transport authorities are other resources used for the analysis. Secondary data analysis is a highly respected method that allows researchers to support existing data in the social sciences by wider use. Its validity increases with repetition of the data.<sup>11</sup> However, applying existing data to the case of transport in Turkey, it is necessary to consider the current Europeanization literature on rational choice institutionalism since scholars have varied perspectives on how to explain the materialistic decision-making process.

### **I. Institutionalism and Europeanization: Interest-driven Logic**

Europeanization is not a theory itself but rather an emergent phenomenon that scholars try to understand in many ways. Within the interest-driven logic of new institutionalism, viewpoints and models that apply to candidate state transformations vary. This study evaluates four different rational choice institutionalism explanatory tenets to achieve greater robustness in the findings through their triangulation.

The first approach is the Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier method based on the "external incentives model".<sup>12</sup> This model assumes a simplistic rationalist bargaining, where utility-maximising actors negotiate with an expected outcome based on the actors' cost-benefit assessments.<sup>13</sup> The EU's external governance principle here is the strategy of conditionality, which

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<sup>11</sup> Janet Heaton, "Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data: An Overview", *Historical Social Research* 33, no. 3 (2008): 33-45.

<sup>12</sup> Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, "Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe", 671.

<sup>13</sup> Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, "Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe", 671.

aims to impose a scheme of “reinforcement by rewards” to provide accession assistance, cooperation deals and the ultimate reward of membership depending on alignment performance.<sup>14</sup> The actors’ calculations are affected by various factors, such as the determinacy of conditions, size and speed of rewards, the power of veto players and the material costs of adoption. This analysis leads to the hypothesis that actors will eventually choose to adopt EU norms if the rewards exceed the costs.<sup>15</sup>

In contrast, Borzel and Risse’s interpretation of the “logic of consequentialism” begins with a necessary “misfit” condition in a candidate state, with the conception of domestic change resulting from redistribution of resources.<sup>16</sup> This misfit creates adaptational pressure for the candidate to cope. Actors are considered as rational, goal oriented and utility maximising parties.<sup>17</sup> Whilst this misfit is a necessary condition, governments subjected to alignment pressure must also have sufficient capacities to exploit the new opportunities or deal with the constraints of the Europeanization process. Their bargaining structure depends on two factors:<sup>18</sup> the number of veto players is important if domestic consensus is settled or “winning coalitions” have formed to stabilize domestic power struggles while supporting institutions are essential to create material and ideational domestic capacities.<sup>19</sup>

Clearly, Europeanization is a dynamic process that varies with different government structures and candidate states. Factors may also vary in terms of their speed and importance in applying this logic to particular regions of Europe. To solve this puzzle, Borzel introduced the idea of “power asymmetries” and developed a wider argument than the misfit concept, claiming that a state’s size, economic power and strength matters when engaging with EU demands.<sup>20</sup> Strategic and economic power struggles can

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<sup>14</sup> Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, “Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe”, 672.

<sup>15</sup> Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier, “Governance by conditionality: EU rule transfer to the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe”, 672.

<sup>16</sup> Borzel and Risse, “When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change”, 5.

<sup>17</sup> Borzel and Risse, “When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change”, 7.

<sup>18</sup> Borzel and Risse, “When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change”, 7.

<sup>19</sup> Borzel and Risse, “When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change”, 7.

<sup>20</sup> Tanja Borzel, “Europeanisation Meets Turkey. A Case Sui Generis?” in Cigdem Nas and Yonca Ozer (eds.) *Turkey and the European Union: Processes of Europeanisation*. (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012), 11-14.

seriously undermine EU pressure, with the regime type and the state's domestic incentives being important for cooperation.<sup>21</sup> That is, EU incentives and rewards, such as membership, should align with the state elite's political preferences since they can also exploit Europeanization as a key instrument to please their domestic voters.<sup>22</sup> Consequently, Europeanization best functions in areas where there are available resources, no threat to national sovereignty and where the process does not limit the state's role.<sup>23</sup>

Similarly, Borzel and Soyaltin's case study about Turkey's Europeanization provides a sound example of the importance of domestic political dynamics, and underlines how the one-size-fits-all approach fails to explain different power structures. They found that domestic change in Turkey is strongly bound to the ruling party's political agenda, whereby the state elite is prone to cherry picking from EU norms.<sup>24</sup> The process in Turkey has been a kind of 'Europeanization a la carte', in which it is most effective when the domestic goals and strategies of the incumbent Justice and Development Party (AKP) have aligned with EU goals and demands. That is, it has gradually become a "legitimization device" that the AKP government has used to impose its own political agenda.<sup>25</sup>

In addition to these four tenets, other research from the Europeanization literature have also inspired this study. By combining transport politics with interest-driven logic, Knill and Lehmkuhl show that the domestic impact of the EU transport acquis varies between countries due to varying domestic opportunity structures.<sup>26</sup> Kerwer and Teutsch also claim that domestic factors are important to liberalize transport policies even at when the EU's impact is weak.<sup>27</sup> As with the approach taken in this study, Akgul Acikmese's proposed cycles of Europeanization in Turkey suggest that there

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<sup>21</sup> Borzel, "Europeanisation Meets Turkey. A Case Sui Generis?", 14.

<sup>22</sup> Borzel, "Europeanisation Meets Turkey. A Case Sui Generis?", 15-16.

<sup>23</sup> Borzel, "Europeanisation Meets Turkey: A Case Sui Generis?", 16.

<sup>24</sup> Tanja Borzel and Didem Soyaltin, "Europeanization in Turkey: Stretching a Concept to its Limits?", *KFG Working Paper*, no. 36 (2012): 1-22.

<sup>25</sup> Borzel and Soyaltin, "Europeanization in Turkey: Stretching a Concept to its Limits?", 1-22.

<sup>26</sup> Christoph Knill and Dirk Lehmkuhl, "The national impact of European Union regulatory policy: Three Europeanization mechanisms", *European Journal of Political Research* 41, no.2 (2003): 255-280.

<sup>27</sup> Dieter Kerwer and Michael Teutsch, "Elusive Europeanization: Liberalizing road haulage in the European Union", *Journal of European Public Policy* 8, no. 1 (2001): 124-143.

have been two distinct periods: first, the process depended on conditionality (2002-2005) but then it was explained through the interplay between domestic and EU levels (after 2005).<sup>28</sup>

In applying the misfit hypothesis to various Turkish policy areas, Celenk claims that, while there was sufficient misfit to trigger administrative reforms in Turkey, this failed to achieve the necessary alignment due to domestic resistance.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, Ertugal combines external incentives with a high degree of misfit in explaining how Turkey's Europeanization began in multi-level governance, although progress has remained slow due to domestic problems.<sup>30</sup> The present study, however, uses transport policy as a case to show how domestic interplay and political selectivity do not inevitably cause resistance; rather, they can instead create a suitable context for some policy reforms to thrive.

The closest argument to this study's claims is made by Yilmaz and Soyaltin, who consider the puzzle stemming from the observance of continued reforms in Turkey's fight against corruption despite weakened EU conditionality.<sup>31</sup> They conclude that Europeanization is possible based on the AKP's strategic calculations. Thus, domestic change can occur even without conditionality if there is a visible misfit.<sup>32</sup> Turkey's selective approach is also evident in other sectors, such as civil society, business interest groups and media, which are influenced by domestic factors to align with European norms.<sup>33</sup> This research aims to strengthen these claims by adding transport policy to the literature as a case where reforms have continued through a selective approach of Turkey's domestic decision makers.

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<sup>28</sup> Sinem Akgul Acikmese, "Cycles of Europeanization in Turkey: The Domestic Impact of EU Conditionality", *UNISCI Discussion Papers*, no. 23 (2010): 129-148.

<sup>29</sup> Ayşe A. Celenk, "Europeanization and Administrative Reform: The Case of Turkey", *Mediterranean Politics* 14, no. 1 (2009): 41-60.

<sup>30</sup> Ebru Ertugal, "Europeanization and multi-level governance in Turkey", *Southeast European and Black Sea Studies* 10, no. 1 (2010): 97-110.

<sup>31</sup> Gozde Yilmaz and Didem Soyaltin, "Zooming into the 'Domestic' in Europeanization Promotion of fight against corruption and minority rights in Turkey", *Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies* 16, no. 1 (2014): 11-29.

<sup>32</sup> Yilmaz and Soyaltin, "Zooming into the 'Domestic' in Europeanization Promotion of fight against corruption and minority rights in Turkey", 11-29.

<sup>33</sup> Gozde Yilmaz, "EU Conditionality is not the only game in town! Domestic drivers of Turkey's Europeanization", *Turkish Studies* 15, no. 2 (2014): 303-321.



## II. Europeanization of Transport Policy

Before analyzing the key periods in detail, we should identify the EU's demands regarding transport to understand what it expected from Turkey in terms of Europeanization. To ensure Turkey's compliance with EU transport norms, Turkish officials received two negotiation chapters. Within the proposed framework, Transport Policy (Chapter 14) and Trans-European Networks (Chapter 21) were the two transport-related tasks that the government had to complete before achieving EU membership.

Chapter 14 requires compliance in four different transport modes: road, rail, maritime and air transport. Starting with road transport, the European Commission wanted Turkey to create an efficient and sustainable road transport system with fair competition in the road transport market.<sup>34</sup> Directives, such as working time regulation, use of digital tachometers, regulations on driver licences and maximum weight limits should be transposed into domestic law.<sup>35</sup> Regarding rail transport, Turkey had to ensure rail market liberalization, safety procedures, infrastructural developments and internal market regulations to promote both passenger and freight transport by rail, integrated into the single European railway policy.<sup>36</sup>

Regarding maritime affairs, market access, fair competition and safety and security measures were important, along with Turkey's agreement with international maritime conventions established under the International Maritime Organization framework.<sup>37</sup> Finally, a fair air transport market had to be ensured with easy access, sound traffic management, safety, protection of customer rights and proper environmental standards.<sup>38</sup>

Although Chapter 21, "Trans-European Networks", does not entirely deal with transport, clauses about European freight mobility were a matter of

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<sup>34</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, Turkey, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy", accessed February 04, 2017, <http://www.ab.gov.tr/index.php?p=86&l=2>

<sup>35</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy".

<sup>36</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy".

<sup>37</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy".

<sup>38</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy".

concern. This policy area aims to align European infrastructure in transport, energy and telecommunications through financial instruments. The part relating to transport, which is called TEN-T (Trans-European Networks on Transport), comprises a European transport corridors scheme that includes Turkey.<sup>39</sup> The EU therefore expected Turkey to adopt a similar network approach for all planned infrastructure investment, thereby interconnecting all transport modes and implementing all the required technical standards.<sup>40</sup>

### III. The First Period: Europeanization with Rewards

As mentioned earlier, this study analyzes Turkey's transport integration into the EU during two different periods. The first starts with the official candidacy decision at the 1999 Helsinki Summit, when Turkey was offered the ultimate future reward of possible membership. While interest-driven rationalist institutionalism applies to both periods, given the enthusiasm generated about future membership, the driving factors during the first period mainly relate to reward mechanisms and the clear prospect of becoming EU member state. Although negotiations had not officially started and guidelines were patchy, the prospect of the eventual reward of membership stimulated important developments in Turkey's transport systems.

The initiatives taken were surprising. First (after its first national election win in 2002), the AKP government engaged in rapid liberalization and Europeanization that affected road, rail and air transport projects. This included a program of liberalizing the long state-controlled rail market to make it more compatible with neo-liberal EU rail market rules.<sup>41</sup> Indeed, by 2001, prior to AKP coming to power, air transport tariffs had been fully liberalized while a new road transport directive had been prepared and implemented in 2003.<sup>42</sup> The National Transport Programme of Turkey

<sup>39</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, Turkey, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 21- Trans-European Networks", accessed February 05, 2017, <http://www.ab.gov.tr/index.php?p=86&l=2>

<sup>40</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 21- Trans-European Networks".

<sup>41</sup> Sinan Ülgen, Selen Sarısoy Guerin, Mahmut Tekçe, "Ulaştırma Sektör Raporu" in Sinan Ülgen (eds.) *İkinci Kuşak Yapısal Reformlar: Altyapı Sektörlerinde De-Regülasyon ve Rekabet, Türkiye'de telekomünikasyon, enerji ve ulaşıma sektörlerinin AB'ye uyumu ışığında evrimi* (İstanbul: EDAM, 2007), 129-189.

<sup>42</sup> Ülgen, Guerin and Tekçe, "Ulaştırma Sektör Raporu", 129-189.

introduced new priorities, particularly ensuring compatibility with the EU's *acquis communautaire* in all transport sectors.<sup>43</sup>

In addition, engagement with the EU through external rewards gained pace. The TINA (Technical Assistance to Transport Infrastructure Needs Assessment) programme, initiated under the authority of the National Pre-Accession Financial Assistance Program for Turkey, launched two significant projects. The first was collaboration on road safety and national highway restructuring between Kırklareli and Aziziye.<sup>44</sup> The TWINNING instrument was used to promote transport workers' safety, regenerate the rail sector's poor infrastructure and support the road sector.<sup>45</sup> TRACECA (Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia) networks were formed with EU financial assistance to ensure that the necessary measures were established for a transport corridor for the Trans-European Networks. Secondly, an additional €10 million was provided under EU guidance for trade facilitation, capacity development, a common legal basis and unification of fees and tariffs.<sup>46</sup> Helped by these external reward programs and the incentive of a positive candidacy decision, growth in Turkey's transport sector increased from 8.9% to 11.7% between 2003 and 2005.<sup>47</sup> The first glimpses of rail market liberalization triggered infrastructural investments, such that in the total railway network increased from 10,959 km in 2003 to 10,984 in 2006.<sup>48</sup> Meanwhile, air transport traffic rose from 529,205 flights to 757,983 in the same period thanks to a growing market.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, Turkey, National Programmes for the Adoption of the Acquis (NPAA): 2003 NPAA, accessed September 08, 2018, <http://www.ab.gov.tr/index.php?p=196&l=2>

<sup>44</sup> General Directorate of Highways, Turkey, AB Kapsamında yürütülen projeler, accessed August 27, 2018, <http://www.kgm.gov.tr/Sayfalar/KGM/SiteTr/KgmAbCalismalari/ABKapsamindaYurutulenProjeler.aspx>

<sup>45</sup> Secretariat General for EU Affairs, Turkey, Twinning Mekanizması ve Türkiye, accessed December 3, 2017, [http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ardb/evt/3\\_ab\\_bakanlihi\\_yayinlari/twinning\\_mekanizmasi.pdf](http://www.ab.gov.tr/files/ardb/evt/3_ab_bakanlihi_yayinlari/twinning_mekanizmasi.pdf)

<sup>46</sup> Transport Corridor Europe, Caucasus, Asia (TRACECA) and Technical Assistance: Projects, accessed March 12, 2018, <http://www.traceca-org.org/en/technical-assistance/>

<sup>47</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communication, Turkey, İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011), accessed July 9, 2017, [http://www.ubak.gov.tr/BLSM\\_WIYS/UBAK/tr/doc-xls/20120726\\_162224\\_204\\_1\\_64.pdf](http://www.ubak.gov.tr/BLSM_WIYS/UBAK/tr/doc-xls/20120726_162224_204_1_64.pdf)

<sup>48</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communication, Turkey, İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011).

<sup>49</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communication, Turkey, İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011).

Given that these achievements were accomplished in a very short period, Schimmelfennig and Sedelmeier's model of "external incentives" suggests one possible explanation. Depending on a reinforcement-by-rewards scheme, the TWINNING, TRACECA and TINA programmes had substantial effects. In addition, the credibility of membership was also a significant factor boosting domestic initiatives. Ziya Öniş also claims that the Helsinki Summit candidacy decision was a powerful incentive for reform.<sup>50</sup> Combined with the negative context of the 2001 economic crisis, the EU's process created incentives, conditions and encouragement for a reform period.<sup>51</sup> Müftüler-Bac argues that the consecutive reforms of this period were largely encouraged by the EU's decision to accept Turkey as a candidate state<sup>52</sup> while the Ministry of Transport itself has also admitted it prepared the 2003 National Programme on Transport directly because of external incentives and the reward of the imminent accession.<sup>53</sup>

Regarding the "logic of consequentialism", this period also had a misfit, which Borzel and Risse argue to be a necessary condition for Europeanization. Specifically, the misfit between the EU acquis and Turkish domestic laws created pressure to reform. This was certainly true for transport in the early years of Europeanization. For example, the European Commission's 2001 Progress Report on Turkey clearly warned about the lack of any legislation to transpose the acquis into Turkish law, no developments in the rail market or liberalization of the air sector and deficiencies in Turkish maritime vessels.<sup>54</sup> Expert sector analyses, such as Keçeci<sup>55</sup> and Ülgen, Guerin and Tekçe,<sup>56</sup> also concur that there was a misfit arising from Turkey's unplanned and unprogrammed transport sector at this time, with Turkey needing liberal reforms to respond to the EU's adaptational pressure.

<sup>50</sup> Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate," 35-50.

<sup>51</sup> Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate," 37.

<sup>52</sup> Meltem Müftüler-Bac. "Turkey's Political Reforms and the Impact of the European Union", *South European Society and Politics* 10, no.1 (2005): 20.

<sup>53</sup> Ministry of Transport, Turkey, "Ulaşımın İletişime Kalkınan Türkiye-2007", accessed July 15, 2018, [http://www.ubak.gov.tr/BLSM\\_WIYS/UBAK/tr/yayinlar/20090612\\_171031\\_204\\_1\\_64.pdf](http://www.ubak.gov.tr/BLSM_WIYS/UBAK/tr/yayinlar/20090612_171031_204_1_64.pdf)

<sup>54</sup> European Commission, "2001 Regular Report on Turkey's Progress Towards Accession", Brussels, SEC 1756, (2001).

<sup>55</sup> Adnan Keçeci, "Türkiye'de Karayolu Taşımacılığı", *Uluslararası Ekonomik Sorunlar Dergisi*, no. XX, (2014).

<sup>56</sup> Ülgen, Guerin and Tekçe, "Ulaştırma Sektör Raporu", 129-189.

While the misfit is evident, other positive mediating factors, such as the shortage of veto players and the support of several institutions, is also notable.<sup>57</sup> In a rationalist bargain, the benefits of implementation, such as EU reward mechanisms (TINA, TWINNING and TRACECA) and the credibility of membership prospects should exceed the costs of adoption, which depend on establishing a domestic consensus and implementation capacity. Conversely, large numbers of veto players or lack of capacity might raise costs, making the rewards less desirable for integration actors. However, this was not the case. There were few players at this time since it was dominated by a domestic consensus initiated by the government itself, with supporting non-state institutions subsequently working with it to ensure physical and financial capacity.

Regarding the low number of veto players, the key date is the 2002 elections, when Turkey abandoned years of consecutive coalitions by electing AKP with an absolute majority. A sound reform capacity and a willing government were established as the key elements of progress.<sup>58</sup> The first AKP government came to power with a neo-liberal agenda in transport, which matched the common European goals, such as a planned transport rulebook, integration between different transport modes, a reregulated transport infrastructure and liberalization of the rail and air markets, with direct reference to the ultimate goal of EU membership.<sup>59</sup> Besides this politically favoured environment of the EU acquis, Turkish citizens had also reached an internal consensus regarding Europeanization, with 68% being in support.<sup>60</sup> Furthermore, non-state actors were also included in the consensus to build a supporting base for aligning Turkish transport. Transport-affiliated organisations, such as the International Transporters' Association (UND) and the Union of Chambers and Commodity Exchanges of Turkey, openly

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<sup>57</sup> Borzel and Risse, "When Europe Hits Home: Europeanization and Domestic Change," 1-24.

<sup>58</sup> Sinan Kuşçu, "The European Union Transportation Policy and its reflection in Turkey", *Gazi Akademik Bakış* 5, no. 9, (2011): 77-91.

<sup>59</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, "2002 Genel Seçimleri Seçim Beyannamesi", accessed July 19, 2017, <http://www.akparti.org.tr/site/dosyalar#!secim-beyannameleri>

<sup>60</sup> Hurriyet Daily News, "Survey: 68 percent of Turkish people want membership to EU.", 2002, accessed July 27, 2017, <http://www.hurriyetailets.com/survey-68-percent-of-turkish-people-want-membership-to-eu.aspx?pageID=438&n=survey-68-percent-of-turkish-people-want-membership-to-eu-2002-02-21>

declared their support for the initiative, creating their own collaboration programs and instruments.<sup>61</sup>

Regarding the capacity-building problems that Turkey faced at this stage of relations, state institutions showed a willingness to ensure a particular solution. That is, the Ministry of Transport prepared the 2003 main strategy for a master plan to comply with the EU's capacity criteria.<sup>62</sup> Coupled with this, state expenditure to increase departmental capacity grew from 77 to 316 million Turkish Liras between 2002 and 2005<sup>63</sup> while employment in transport reached 20,067.<sup>64</sup> In sum, a positive environment politically, coupled with support from Turkish society, produced a very healthy period for Europeanization.

#### IV. The Second Period: Stability against a Backlash

In contrast, the political climate in EU-Turkey relations underwent a significant change after 2005. Although the negotiations had officially started, a decade passed with unfavourable exchanges between the parties. Naturally, a change in the political circumstances also affected the enduring factors that maintained Europeanization. For transport alignment, this had a great impact. Once the enthusiasm of the previous five years dissipated, the credibility of EU membership as an ultimate award also clearly faded. Fuelled by an unsupportive environment following the rejection of the Constitutional Treaty, the EU's absorption capacity became a significant issue that threatened Turkey's accession aspirations.<sup>65</sup> Possible permanent safeguards were proposed to limit the mobility of Turkish people and trade, even after membership, thereby further confusing the already troubled actors.<sup>66</sup> In 2006, the European Council suspended eight negotiation

<sup>61</sup> Hürriyet, "İş dünyasından AB'ye tam destek", 2003, accessed August 11, 2018, <http://www.hurriyet.com.tr/is-dunyasindan-abye-tam-destek-151518>

<sup>62</sup> Ministry of Transport and Istanbul Technical University, Turkey "Ulaştırma Ana Planı Stratejisi Sonuç Raporu", 2005, accessed May 12, 2017, [http://www.bebka.org.tr/admin/datas/sayfas/files/15\\_ulasirma\\_ana.pdf](http://www.bebka.org.tr/admin/datas/sayfas/files/15_ulasirma_ana.pdf)

<sup>63</sup> Ministry of Finance, General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control, Turkey "İstatistikler: Kuruluşlar itibarıyla bütçe ödenekleri ve harcamaları", 2016, accessed October 2, 2017, <http://www.bumko.gov.tr/TR,4461/butce-gider-gelir-gerceklesmeleri-1924-2012.html>

<sup>64</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communications, Turkey "İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011)", 2011.

<sup>65</sup> Gergana Noutcheva and Senem Aydın-Duzgit, "Lost in Europeanisation: The Western Balkans and Turkey", *West European Politics* 35, no.1, (2012): 68.

<sup>66</sup> Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate," 41.

chapters, including transport, and which have not since been reopened, until Turkey implements the Ankara Protocol to recognize Cyprus.<sup>67</sup> Changing dynamics were also an issue domestically. While the AKP government further consolidated its power having won nearly 50% of the votes in the 2007 general elections, the party's stance towards Europeanization became more negative.<sup>68</sup> Expectations were overturned by and stalemate in various policy areas, including judicial<sup>69</sup> and democratic reforms,<sup>70</sup> fundamental human rights<sup>71</sup> and environment policies.<sup>72</sup>

However, the curious position of transport Europeanization was that, against all the odds, it never lost its momentum. That is, Turkey continued with a stable determination to complete alignment.<sup>73</sup> Despite the loss of the credibility of rewards and political and societal support, transport policy integration was boosted by one unchanged factor over the two periods: the correlation between the AKP's neo-liberal transport goals and the EU's transport acquis. Indeed, since 2005, all transport sectors have continued to align with this acquis, and at an accelerating rate. For example, digital tachometer systems became obligatory after the required legal and structural harmonization was completed, whereby Turkey also became a party to the Convention on Road Safety and related international agreements.<sup>74</sup> The continued liberalization of the rail transport market was boosted by a new directive. To regulate these efforts, a separate directorate was established to increase administrative capacity.<sup>75</sup> Seafarers' biggest obstacle, the blacklisting of Turkish vessels due to the fleet's poor safety record, was

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<sup>67</sup> Noutcheva and Aydin-Duzgit, "Lost in Europeanisation: The Western Balkans and Turkey," 68.

<sup>68</sup> Öniş, "Turkey-EU Relations: Beyond the Current Stalemate," 40-41.

<sup>69</sup> Noutcheva and Aydin-Duzgit, "Lost in Europeanisation: The Western Balkans and Turkey," 59-78.

<sup>70</sup> Senem Aydın-Düzgit and Fuat Keyman, "EU-Turkey relations and the stagnation of Turkish democracy", *Global Turkey in Europe: Political, Economic and Foreign Policy Dimensions of Turkey's Evolving Relationship with the EU Working Papers 2* (2013): 1-24.

<sup>71</sup> Amanda Akçakoca, "EU-Turkey relations 43 years on: train crash or temporary derailment?", *EPC Issue Paper*, no. 50, (2006): 1-29.

<sup>72</sup> Rana Izci, "Europeanisation of Turkish Environmental Policy with special reference to sustainability discourse" in Çiğdem Nas and Yonca Özer (eds.) *Turkey and the European Union: Processes of Europeanization*, (Surrey: Ashgate, 2012): 181-205.

<sup>73</sup> Deniz Servantie, "A Comparative Analysis of EU and Turkish Aviation Policies", *IKV Brief*, 35, (2015): 13.

<sup>74</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy".

<sup>75</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, "Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy".

lifted, so that Turkey was finally included on the safe lists of international conventions.<sup>76</sup> Having achieved immense infrastructural developments in the air industry, the EU-Turkey Horizontal Aviation Agreement was signed to implement new passenger safety regulations, which also led Turkey to push more for integration into the Single European Sky project.<sup>77</sup>

Concerning the completion of Trans-European network transport corridors, projects such as the rehabilitation and reconstruction of the Ankara-Istanbul High Speed Railway line, the Samsun-Kalin line and the Irmak-Zonguldak line, started under the authority and funding of the continuing TINA programme.<sup>78</sup> Funds were provided through an agreement prepared between the Ministry of Transport and the Delegation of the EU in Turkey.<sup>79</sup> Clearly, while membership credibility had faded, EU-funded reward mechanisms endured. In fact, IPA-based TINA projects continued with a total investment of close to 585 million euros.<sup>80</sup> In addition, new initiatives developed under the authority of TRACECA began, including a multimodal transport dialogue and the strengthening of transport training.<sup>81</sup> Meanwhile, the Ministry of Transport introduced new strategies to the Transport Operational Programme for EU alignment: strengthening railway infrastructure, new priorities for port construction and technical assistance to the sector with TINA funds.<sup>82</sup> In just five years between 2006 and 2011, these alignment efforts produced extremely positive outcomes towards completing the Europeanization process for transportation. There were now 12,000 km of railway, of which 826 km were restructured.<sup>83</sup> Likewise,

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<sup>76</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, “Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy”.

<sup>77</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, “Accession Negotiations: Chapter 14- Transport Policy”.

<sup>78</sup> DIRECTORATE FOR EU AFFAIRS, “Accession Negotiations: Chapter 21- Trans-European Networks”.

<sup>79</sup> Turkish State Railways, “AB ile Türkiye arasında yüksek hızlı tren projesi hibe anlaşması imzalandı”, accessed July 06, 2018, <http://www.tcdd.org.tr/ab-ile-turkiye-arasinda-yuksekhizli-tren-projesi-hibe-anlasmasi-imzalandi+h205>.

<sup>80</sup> European Commission, “Regional Policy: IPA Transport Operational Programme in Turkey”, accessed July 08, 2017, [http://ec.europa.eu/regional\\_policy/en/funding/ipa/turkey/transport](http://ec.europa.eu/regional_policy/en/funding/ipa/turkey/transport).

<sup>81</sup> Transport Corridor Europe, Caucasus, Asia-TRACECA, Technical Assistance: Projects, accessed March 12, 2018, <http://www.traceca-org.org/en/technical-assistance/>

<sup>82</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communications, Turkey, “Transport Operational Programme”, accessed December 01, 2017, <http://op.udhb.gov.tr/index.php?lang+En#>

<sup>83</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communications, Turkey, “İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011)”, 2011.



market openings and immense new infrastructural developments enabled air transport traffic to rise from 852,175 to 1,335,185 flights between 2006 and 2011.<sup>84</sup> Over the same period, maritime passenger traffic reached more than a million passengers.<sup>85</sup>

This raises the question of why there was this anomaly in the transport sector. Given the reduced credibility of EU rewards, the suspension of EU chapters and an unfavourable domestic political agenda, what could keep transport policy in accord with Europeanization? To address this question and highlight the changing factors (if any), it is necessary to consider the nature of the factors identified in the first period and compare these with those of the second.

The external incentives model seems useful for understanding the reasons behind this continuing Europeanization in transport in contrast to many other policy areas. In terms of external rewards and funding, the TINA and TRACECA programs actively invested in and prepared Turkey in exchange for policy regulation. Research shows that TINA projects in Turkey were successful while the Commission's technical advice was evident.<sup>86</sup> However, once EU membership prospect as the ultimate reward disappeared, the value of these programs also diminished. Without the final reward, there was a good chance that the alignment costs might exceed the prize. If membership is the most valuable goal in a rationalist bargain, then it is naïve to assume that the reward mechanisms are the sole reason for this progress. However, the misfit condition of the logic of consequentialism also cannot explain what happened during this second period. Evidence from the second period does not indicate that the misfit between Turkish policies and the European demands was large or meaningful enough to create the necessary adaptational pressure for implementation. The 2014 Progress report on Turkey indicated a moderately advanced Turkish transport policy, approaching the final stage of the alignment process in areas such as the TEN-T plans<sup>87</sup> while the 2013 Progress report reports the same trend,

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<sup>84</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communications, Turkey, "İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011)", 2011.

<sup>85</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communications, Turkey, "İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011)", 2011.

<sup>86</sup> Sevinç Yaman, "Trans Avrupa Ulaşım Şebekelerinin (TEN-T) gelişimi kapsamında Türkiye'de Yürütülen Çalışmalar", *Uluslararası Ekonomik Sorunlar Dergisi*, no. XXXIV, (2009): 24-48.

<sup>87</sup> European Commission, "Turkey 2014 Progress Report", SWD (2014) 307 final, Brussels, (2014).

indicating that the two actors were becoming more closely matched.<sup>88</sup> Indeed, other sector groups, like the Economic Development Foundation and their independent reports, also concluded that Turkey had closed the relevant alignment gaps since the start of negotiations.<sup>89</sup>

Adding to the unfavourable conditions, the domestic consensus and the winning coalition of the first years had lost its momentum, with political actors starting to see the process as a disadvantageous commitment. Even the previously fiercest supporter of Europeanization, the ruling AKP government, changed its stance into a critical tone and even started to act as a veto player. Initially, this change in discourse affected the Ministry of Transport's policies and behavior. Its former minister, Lütfi Elvan, declared that the EU was hindering Turkey's route to membership, which would result in a lack of effectiveness in the alignment process.<sup>90</sup> He also signified that the EU was not Turkey's only option because there was always an option for the transport sector to find other partnerships.<sup>91</sup> At another meeting, Elvan also claimed that, since Turkish transport had already aligned with the EU acquis, the EU was not following its own rules and treating Turkey unfairly.<sup>92</sup> Similarly, previously supportive non-state actors also became far more critical of the Europeanization of transport. Institutions like the International Transporters Federation, a prominent industrial logistics group in Turkey, criticized EU inactivity regarding road transportation quotas, and claimed that existing regulations were poor treatment of a country obeying Customs Union rules.<sup>93</sup> Overall, societal consensus over Europeanization process had reached its nadir, with only 17% of the Turkish population believing that Turkey would ever become a member state.<sup>94</sup>

<sup>88</sup> European Commission, "Turkey 2013 Progress Report", SWD (2013) 417 final, Brussels, (2013).

<sup>89</sup> Economic Development Foundation, "Açılmayan Müzakare Fasıllarında ne durumdayız?", *Economic Development Foundation Publications*, no. 279, (2016): 1-35.

<sup>90</sup> Sözcü, "Türkiye'nin Alternatif yolları var", accessed November 08, 2018, <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2015/gunun-icinden/turkiyenin-alternatif-yollari-var-758735/>

<sup>91</sup> Sözcü, "Türkiye'nin Alternatif yolları var", accessed November 08, 2018, <https://www.sozcu.com.tr/2015/gunun-icinden/turkiyenin-alternatif-yollari-var-758735/>

<sup>92</sup> ABHaber, "Ulaştırma Bakanı Lütfi Elvan: AB kendi kurallarına uymuyor. AB, Türkiye'ye karşı tarife dışı engeller koymaya çalışıyor", accessed March 12, 2017, <http://www.abhaber.com/ulastirma-bakan-lutfi-elvan-ab-kendi-kurallarına-uymuyor-ab-turkiyeye-karsi-tarife-disi-engeller-koymaya-calisiyor/>

<sup>93</sup> Cumhuriyet, "Kota sorunu AB'ye taşınıyor", accessed April 22, 2017, [http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/diger/57156/Kota\\_sorunun\\_AB\\_ye\\_tasiniyor.html](http://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/haber/diger/57156/Kota_sorunun_AB_ye_tasiniyor.html)

<sup>94</sup> Habertürk, "AB'ye destek dibe vurdu", accessed July 17, 2017, <http://www.haberturk.com/dunya/haber/769291-abye-destek-dibe-vurdu>

One small consolidation was that formal institutions maintained their support and signalled an increasing contribution in response to continued EU financial instruments. Reform capacity and coordination with government bureaucracy is crucial for progress in alignment.<sup>95</sup> To increase bureaucratic capacity and speed up investments, government transport expenditure increased from 0.22% to 5.04% of the budget between 2005 and 2012.<sup>96</sup> Over the same period, employment in the transport sector also rose to 24,110 employees from 20,067.<sup>97</sup> Combined, these two factors pushed the growth rate of the sector to 10.8%.<sup>98</sup>

Nevertheless, given all the unfavourable conditions, ranging from a loss of reward credibility, the government's decreased motivation and the disappearance of the misfit, support from formal institutions and continued financial funding cannot explain the significant boost in transport after 2005. Given that these two positive variables were also a contributing factor in the first period, it should be assumed that, with all the new negative factors, the costs should have exceeded the benefits so that the process faded away. The continuation of capacity building in this second period provides a possible clue to the correlation between compliance and domestic government preferences. Thus, this study uses the "domestic incentive" approach to suggest an additional factor to explain the stabilization of benefits against costs in the second period.

Tanja Börzel's suggestion of "domestic incentives" as a mediating factor is a useful guide for defining the main drivers of this period. The domestic impact of EU norms depends on their compatibility with domestic political preferences and the survival strategies of the ruling elites.<sup>99</sup> Thus, although the AKP government criticized the membership process, research has shown that its party programme and goals were still aligned with the EU acquis on transport. This indicates that the mutual benefit structure established between the two actors weathered the negative storm of the post-2005 period.

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<sup>95</sup> Dilek Özdemir, "Avrupa Birliği'nin Sürdürülebilir Taşımacılık Politikaları ve Türkiye'nin Konumu", *13. Ulusal Bölge Planlama Kongresi: Bölgesel Gelişme için Yeniden Yapılanma Gündemi*, (2010): 1-13.

<sup>96</sup> Ministry of Finance, General Directorate of Budget and Fiscal Control, Turkey, "İstatistikler: Kuruluşlar itibarıyla bütçe ödenekleri ve harcamaları", 2016.

<sup>97</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communications, Turkey, "İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011)", 2011.

<sup>98</sup> Ministry of Transport, Maritime and Communications, Turkey, "İstatistiklerle Ulaştırma, Denizcilik ve Haberleşme (2003-2011)", 2011.

<sup>99</sup> Borzel, "Europeanisation Meets Turkey. A Case Sui Generis?", 11-14.

It is fair to argue that the AKP is still a strong defender of neo-liberal policies, including market reforms and strict liberal regulations. This has not changed in this period, even if its earlier positive tone towards the EU has. Since transport policies lie at the heart of neo-liberal stability programs, it is perhaps not surprising to see that the party's policies are still compatible with these alignment goals. In fact, a commitment to the idea of convergence is still included in the party's official program. The AKP's transport policy has evolved around the ideas of interconnectivity between modes, liberalization of transport markets and investment in new infrastructure projects without damaging the environment.<sup>100</sup> The EU's demands are also clearly aligned with the party's priorities, such as reducing fatal road accident rates, for which the AKP uses the EU-28 average as a benchmark.<sup>101</sup> The ruling party's loyalty to Europeanization in transport is also clear from its election manifestos. Only a year after the transport chapter was suspended, AKP demonstrated its commitment through infrastructure building on rail and restructuring road regulations, despite all the negativity surrounding the policy area.<sup>102</sup> Combining the maintenance of support from formal institutions and external financial incentives, this convergence of domestic and regional interests may well be the main motivation the continued transport developments during this period.

Although the domestic incentive structure is strong and helps to maintain the momentum of Europeanization, selectivity arises once a technical integration area is affected by political interests. Alongside the loosened grip of conditionality, the strengthened position of domestic matters could encourage policy-makers to resort to intensive cherry picking amongst alignment demands. Fortunately for Turkey's transport policy, state officials have consistently used it as an instrument to gain domestic political power. Therefore, transport policy has been carefully selected because of its attractiveness for domestic voters and its desirability for the AKP to succeed in local elections. Börzel and Soyaltın have therefore introduced the concept of "Europeanization a la carte" or "selective Europeanization" to explain how Turkey's ruling elites intentionally select from alignment policies to use as a domestic "legitimation device".<sup>103</sup> This also aligns with the "logic of

<sup>100</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, "Parti Programı", accessed July 21, 2018, <https://www.akparti.org.tr/english/akparti/parti-programme>

<sup>101</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, "Hedef 2023: Ulaşım ve Haberleşme", accessed July 21, 2018, <https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/hedefler/ulastirma-ve-haberlesme/11013>

<sup>102</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, "2007 Genel Seçimleri Seçim Beyannamesi", 2007.

<sup>103</sup> Borzel and Soyaltın, "Europeanization in Turkey: Stretching a Concept to its Limits?", 1-22.

consequentialism”, whereby candidate states tend to micro-manage a simple policy area like transport with an agenda of integration only if it suits their domestic needs. For the post-2005 period in Turkey, this conceptual framework seems highly applicable to transport policy regarding two major examples: the Marmaray railway line and the North Marmara Highway project.

The Marmaray project is a part EU-financed initiative to connect Asia and Europe for the first time via a rail tunnel under the Bosphorus strait. The project also suits the European approach of interconnectivity and rail infrastructure development. It was finished in 2013, with the EU being the chief investor. The EU and the European Investment Bank (EIB) were mainly interested in the project because the plan was already part of the TEN-T network for the 4<sup>th</sup> Pan-European corridor and Marmaray also connects this corridor with another EU initiative, the Ankara-İstanbul high-speed railway.<sup>104</sup> The then Vice-President of the EIB, Pim Van Ballekom, coined the term “admiral project”, when explaining the importance of the project for Turkey’s transport integration.<sup>105</sup> In line with the EU’s financial approval, the AKP government hailed Marmaray as one of their key domestic achievements. Explained as the “project of the century” or “a dream come true”,<sup>106</sup> this pride once again proved the importance and instrumentality of EU-financed projects in the domestic arena. Marmaray was also used as an instrument in the ruling party’s 2015 election manifesto as evidence of the AKP’s achievements in domestic transport.<sup>107</sup>

The North Marmara Highway project, which includes the third road bridge over the Bosphorus, is another example of the political instrumentality of the EU initiatives in transport and the alignment of these concerns with the domestic political agenda. The highway has been considered a priority in the

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<sup>104</sup> Delegation of the European Union to Turkey, “Türkiye’nin Marmaray Projesi için AYB’den 200 Milyon Euro daha”, accessed May 08, 2017, <http://avrupa.info.tr/tr/bilgi-kaynaklari/basin-odasi/press-releases-single-view/article/tuerkiyenin-marmaray-projesi-icin-aybden-200-milyon-euro-daha.html>

<sup>105</sup> Delegation of the European Union to Turkey, “Türkiye’nin Marmaray Projesi için AYB’den 200 Milyon Euro daha”, accessed May 08, 2017, <http://avrupa.info.tr/tr/bilgi-kaynaklari/basin-odasi/press-releases-single-view/article/tuerkiyenin-marmaray-projesi-icin-aybden-200-milyon-euro-daha.html>

<sup>106</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, “Hedef 2023: Ulaşım ve Haberleşme”, accessed July 21, 2018, <https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/hedefler/ulastirma-ve-haberlesme/11013>

<sup>107</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, “2015 Genel Seçimleri Beyannamesi”, 2015.

TEN-T routes crossing Turkish territory.<sup>108</sup> Consecutive AKP governments have also proposed the North Marmara Highway as an election promise<sup>109</sup>, including it into its 2015 election manifesto.<sup>110</sup> During a visit to the construction site of the new bridge, former Prime Minister and Minister of Transport, Binali Yıldırım, mentioned how the project was vital for the party and its future election chances, as well as representing other functions, such as being beneficial to sector growth in transport and the overall economy.<sup>111</sup> These two examples show that even when Turkey and the EU lost confidence over many policy areas, ranging from human rights to democracy, transport was classified in the “selective Europeanization” range owing to its enduring desirability for domestic political gains. During the second period, there is clear evidence how the “logic of consequentialism” continued to apply, even when there were no credible rewards from the EU. The changing dynamics of this example of Europeanization signify that a process may be sustainable through the survival of domestic incentives.

### Conclusion

EU-Turkish relations have clearly seen better times than at present. After recent attempts by the European Parliament to suspend the negotiations altogether, the future would appear to be bleak for those in Turkey championing EU membership. This political backlash could well damage the relatively harmonious economic relations of more than sixty years. To prevent this, the EU and Turkey need to find ways to continue these beneficial relations even if the membership deal fails. This study started with a puzzle as to why a EU policy area continued to exhibit stable domestic alignment for Turkey despite a series of unfortunate losses of rewards. Logically, the opposite would be expected, as was seen in other policy areas. Yet, transport endured as counterintuitive case, making it essential to investigate the main drivers behind Europeanization in Turkey.

<sup>108</sup> General Directorate of Highways, Turkey, “Türkiye TEN-T (Avrupa Transit Taşımacılık Ağı) Karayolu Güzergahları”, accessed June 08, 2018, <http://www.kgm.gov.tr/Sayfalar/KGM/SiteTr/KgmAbCalismalari/TurkiyeTEN-TKarayoluGuzergahlari.aspx>

<sup>109</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, “Hedef 2023: Ulaşım ve Haberleşme”, accessed July 21, 2018, <https://www.akparti.org.tr/site/hedefler/ulastirma-ve-haberlesme/11013>

<sup>110</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, “2015 Genel Seçimleri Beyannamesi”, 2015.

<sup>111</sup> Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi, “Başbakan Yıldırım, Yavuz Sultan Selim Köprüsü’nde açıklamalarda bulundu”, accessed August 06, 2017, <http://m.akparti.org/site/haberler/basbakan-yildirim-sultan-selim-koprusunde-incelemelerde-bulundu/85349#1>

Accordingly, this investigation began by considering the policy area under the lens of the “logic of consequentialism” between the actors. Rationalist institutionalism applied to transport in that the nature of the policy is tightly bound to economic and material relations. The conceptual explanations of rationalist institutionalism were then discussed through various variables and mediating factors to apply them to the case of Turkish transport. This involved testing the case by dividing Turkey’s Europeanization into two periods following the offer of EU candidacy in 1999 to monitor the changing dynamics within the process, which was firmly believed in from the start. During the first period between 1999 and 2005, Turkey and the EU experienced a honeymoon in their relations due to the energy of the candidacy and negotiations whereas the second period since 2005 has been characterized by stalemate, with constant political shifts.

This study concludes that, while there has been real stability in the Europeanization of transport policy, the main driving forces behind this have been the changing dynamics between the two periods. During the first years, the credibility of membership and clarity of rewards were the main triggers, which meant that transport policy was also imbued with a positive tone. After 2005, against all the odds, the Europeanization of transport continued rather than stagnated. Since the ultimate reward was no longer evident, other factors had to be identified to explain this stability. These included the desirability of Europeanization domestically and AKP’s insistence on using the process as an instrument for domestic gains. Evidence from this period indicates that, even without reward schemes or misfits, there is a way for Europeanization to thrive, given a positive correlation of domestic political goals with common European projects. Turkey’s alignment on transport constitutes a very significant case in point.

For the reasons mentioned earlier in this conclusion, making future projections about the EU-Turkey relations is not easy. However, the parties need to learn how to function in an undesirable environment, to protect the benefits of what has been established so far and ensure that these relations continue to thrive. Transport policy, and what the EU and Turkey have already achieved in this policy area, can be a very inspiring example for all policy areas under negotiation. Its legacy is to suggest that policy makers seek alternative ways or even change the dynamics and relevant factors when necessary. In sum, the case of transport in Turkey shows that Europeanization can work against the odds if the actors choose to be more realistic and find channels to create goals that apply to both the member state’s domestic arena and Europe as a whole.

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